



**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO**  
Great Government Through the General Management System – Quality, Timeliness, Value  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

**CLASS SPECIFICATION**

**CLASSIFIED**

**RETIREMENT COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER**  
**RETIREMENT SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER**

**Class No. 007562**  
**Class No. 007563**

**■ CLASSIFICATION PURPOSE**

To design and carry out internal and external communication, education, and outreach plans for retirement planning, associated benefits, and services; and to perform related work.

**■ DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

The Retirement Communication Officer series is allocated only to the San Diego County Employees Retirement Association (SDCERA). Incumbents develop strategic communication plans and processes utilizing a broad range of mediums to communicate information to diverse audiences.

Retirement Communications Officer: This is the journey-level class in the series. Under general supervision, incumbents are responsible for a broad range of member and employee communications.

Retirement Senior Communications Officer: This is the lead-level in the series. Under general supervision, incumbents perform the more complex internal and external communications; and may provide lead direction to subordinate Communications Officers.

**■ FUNCTIONS**

The examples of functions listed in the class specifications are representative but not necessarily exhaustive or descriptive of any one position in the classes. Management is not precluded from assigning other related functions not listed herein if such duties are a logical assignment for the position.

Retirement Communications Officer

Essential Functions:

1. Designs and edits publication of booklets including narrative and statistical information for retirement system benefits and health insurance programs.
2. Presents seminars, planning workshops, and related training.
3. Edits scripts for video and power point productions.
4. Prepares documents for web site development/updates and including writing and editing frequently asked questions, forms and templates, published booklets, fact sheets, event calendars, benefit calculators, and status of impending changes to retirement benefits.
5. Consults in designing materials and references for use in responding to member questions to the call center.
6. Develops ideas, contributes articles, and/or serves as editor and designer for newsletter including layout, printing, mail house and distribution.
7. Oversees production and printing of publications by vendors and including blue lining/proofing, selection of printing materials, color schemes, and distribution/mailing.
8. Plans, organizes, advertises, and coordinates special events for the membership including program content, guest speakers, enrollment, and location logistics.
9. Responds to questions via e-mail, telephone, correspondence, or in person.
10. Consults with and provides technical communication assistance to SDCERA staff for style guides, format, and design concepts for correspondence, forms, policies, procedures, financial and account statements, and investment reports.
11. Creates logos and related themes to develop and maintain corporate identity and program visibility.

12. Maintains electronic records and archives, communication files and logs.
13. Prepares media kits and press releases as assigned.
14. Provides courteous, high quality service to members of the Retirement Association and the public by personally responding to requests for service or making appropriate referrals.

#### Retirement Senior Communications Officer

##### Essential Functions:

All the functions listed above and

1. Leads and trains subordinate Retirement Communication Officers and other staff.
2. Plans, schedules, and tracks status of on-going and new projects.
3. Designs and maintains plans for communication programs and projects.
4. Designs surveys and evaluation forms, tabulates and analyzes results to measure communication effectiveness and to recommend improvements and changes.
5. Prepares RFI or RFP as needed.
6. Handles the most difficult communication assignments.

### ■ KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

#### Knowledge of:

The following apply to both classes:

- Communication and public relations theory, concepts, practices, and strategies.
- Methods, techniques, and styles of business and article writing, organization, construction, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and word usage.
- Methods and techniques of public speaking and script writing
- Methods and techniques for formatting, design, and layout for print and electronic text and graphic design.
- California Government Code (County Employees Retirement Law Of 1937) provisions and related benefit, employment, and tax laws.
- County Compensation Ordinance provisions and Memorandums of Agreement related to the administration of employment retirement benefits.
- The General Management system in principle and practice.
- Telephone, office, and online etiquette.
- Customer service objectives and strategies.

#### Retirement Senior Communications Officer (in addition to the above):

- Principles and techniques of effective training methodologies.
- Principles and techniques of lead direction and functional supervision.

#### Skills and Abilities to:

The following apply to both classes:

- Design, present, and carry out formal communication plans.
- Meet project deadlines and project milestones.
- Compose and edit copy for a variety of communication mediums (e.g., websites, telephone/information lines, newsletters, publications, correspondence, flyers, and payroll stuffers).
- Write concisely and cohesively for diverse audiences incorporating design appeal, color, and graphic schemes.
- Proficiently use personal computer applications in a business environment (e.g., Windows XP and Microsoft Office, including intermediate to advanced skills in Word and Excel).
- Proficiently use desktop publishing applications (intermediate to advance skills in Photoshop, Illustrator, and QuarkXpress).
- Design and produce in-house publications, guides, and presentations.
- Prepare agendas, handouts, and training outlines and guides.
- Deliver oral presentations and facilitate group dynamics.
- Research, interpret, summarize, and explain (both orally and in writing) complex legislative bills, statutes, case law, and other information regarding the administration of public retirement systems and benefits.
- Maintain confidentiality of personnel, payroll, and other membership personal information.
- Use appropriate judgment in working with issues that are sensitive or political in nature.

- Perform arithmetic calculations, basic statistics, and cost analysis.
- Stay informed of trends and changes in the communications field, including method and technology changes related to print and electronic media.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with SDCERA, County employees, SDCERA members, Retirement Board Members, vendors, and related business contacts.
- Treat County employees, representatives of outside agencies, and members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Assess the customer's immediate needs and ensure customer's receipt of needed services through personal service or referral.
- Provide prompt, efficient, and responsive service.
- Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information; analyze and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.

Retirement Senior Communications Officer (in addition to the above):

- Organize, plan, assign, and review work.
- Assist in establishing internal policy, procedures, forms, and workflow.
- Respond to the most difficult questions regarding retirement law and benefits.
- Design special projects, including timetables and identification controls for resources.
- Train, lead, and motivate permanent and temporary staff.

## ■ EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Education, training, and/or experience that demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills, and abilities listed above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are:

Retirement Communications Officer:

1. A bachelor's degree in Communications, Journalism, English, Business Administration, Human Resources (benefits administration and staff development), or a closely related degree, **AND**
2. At least two (2) years of full-time experience designing and authoring business communication plans and outreach/public information projects including newsletters, booklets, guides, websites, desktop publishing, training/education seminars, symposiums, mass mailings, and videos.

Retirement Senior Communications Officer:

1. A bachelor's degree in Communications, Journalism, English, Business Administration, Human Resources (benefits administration and staff development), or a closely related degree, **AND**
2. At least four (4) years of full-time experience designing and authoring business communication plans and outreach/public information projects including newsletters, booklets, guides, websites, desktop publishing, training/education seminars, symposiums, mass mailings, and videos.

**Note:** Additional years of job-related journey-level experience may substitute for the educational requirement on a year-for-year basis.

## ■ ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

**The physical characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the classifications. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable an individual with qualified disabilities to perform the essential functions of a job, on a case-by-case basis.**

Continuous upward and downward flexion of the neck. Frequent: standing, walking, sitting, repetitive use of hands to operate computers, printers and copiers. Occasional: bending and twisting of neck, bending and twisting of waist, squatting, simple grasping, reaching above and below shoulder level, and lifting and carrying of files weighing up to 10 pounds.

## ■ SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS

License

A valid California class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, is required at time of appointment, or the ability to arrange necessary and timely transportation for field travel. Employees in this class may be required to use their own vehicle.

Certification/Registration

None Required.

Working Conditions

Office environment; exposure to computer screens and basic office equipment.

Background Investigation

Must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Misdemeanor and/or felony convictions may be disqualifying depending on type, number, severity, and recency. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a background investigation.

Probationary Period

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in these classes shall serve a probationary period of 12 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

**New: June 1, 2000**

**Revised: July 28, 2000**

**Reviewed: Spring 2003**

**Revised: June 14, 2004**

**Retitled/Revised: October 29, 2004 (Class No. 007563 - From: Retirement Communications Manager)**

Retirement Communications Officer (Class No. 007562)  
Retirement Senior Communications Officer (Class No. 007563)

Union Code: CE  
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Variable Entry: Y  
Variable Entry: Y